

From: Bruce Wolfe
To: Andree Greenberg; Shin-Roei Lee
CC: Dale Bowyer
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2009 6:16 PM
Subject: Fwd: Saltworks letter from PRBO
Attachments: PRBO Redwood Saltworks Development Letter 7-2-09.pdf

Here's the email with David Lewis' editorial and Ellie Cohen's attached letter about the Saltworks that I mentioned at yesterday's meeting - some good points in Ellie's letter.

Barbara Ransom called me today to say she thought yesterday's tour went well, that they are pushing the Corps on "pre-emptive jurisdiction" (or whatever the term is for essentially saying that they'll just say that all waters are jurisdictional), that they want to focus on the functions of the waters that will be impacted, and that they work with us on making sure the project has appropriate flood management and stormwater controls. I said that all sounded good to me, agreed that we wanted to work with them on flood/stormwater, and said you would be point on that, Shin-Roei. No real next steps at this point, but I will touch base with the other LTMS agencies to get a sense of where they are.

Thanks!

>>> "David Lewis" <dlewis@savesfbay.org> 7/14/2009 3:37 PM >>>
For PRBO's very strong letter on this topic!

From: Sandra Scoggin [mailto:sscoggin@sfbayiv.org]
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2009 2:01 PM
Subject: FW: New plan for housing on S.F. Bay is reckless

From: Ellie Cohen [mailto:ecohen@prbo.org]
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2009 11:40 AM
To: David Lewis
Cc: Sandra Scoggin; Beth Huning; Fritz Reid
Subject: New plan for housing on S.F. Bay is reckless

Congratulations David- excellent piece that ran in the paper yesterday.
Thanks for all your work on this.

Beth/Sandra- thanks for sharing with the rest of the management board!

Best-

Ellie

<<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/artlist.cgi?key=IN&directory=Pink>>

SF Chronicle

New plan for housing on S.F. Bay is reckless

David Lewis

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2009/06/14/INSV183RFN.D>
TL

Sunday, June 14, 2009

Rampant development had shrunk San Francisco Bay by one-third before a citizen revolution halted the destruction 50 years ago, and now the whole region cherishes the natural treasure we've protected and restored. But every few years another misguided developer proposes to fill in the bay, and the latest arrogant plan is a whopper.

On the edge of Redwood City is the largest unprotected stretch of restorable bay shoreline, 40 percent larger than Golden Gate Park. Once thriving bay wetlands, these 1,433 acres were diked off from tidal action to create salt evaporation ponds now owned by agribusiness giant Cargill Inc.

Cargill consolidated its salt-making operation in Newark by 2005, then teamed with Arizona luxury home builder DMB to propose paving over the Redwood City ponds for 12,000 new homes and 25,000 new residents. If approved, this project would be the largest development on the bay shoreline since massive amounts of fill turned a small island into Foster City in the 1960s.

Sound incredible? It should, because Redwood City zoning has never permitted development on these ponds, which are located in a floodplain, and state and federal laws prohibit filling wetlands when alternatives are available. These developers, like so many before them, believe they can buy approval for enormous sprawl into the bay. They have already spent millions on slick PR campaigns to recast this bay fill as green development and are making big promises to restore some wetlands on the site in exchange for destroying the rest.

But Bay Area residents know it is not necessary to destroy more of the bay to restore it. San Francisco International Airport tried to sell that Orwellian approach a decade ago, saying large-scale wetlands restoration would be possible only if the airport paid to convert salt ponds to tidal marsh in exchange for paving over 2 square miles of bay for runways.

Public outcry killed the runway proposal in 2002, and a year later state and federal wildlife agencies bought and started restoring 16,500 acres of bay salt ponds without any filling of the bay.

Our region's quality of life and economy depend on a healthy and vibrant San Francisco Bay. The bay brings millions of dollars to our state from tourism, industry, recreation and fishing. The bay moderates our local climate and provides vital habitat to 500 species of wildlife. Retired salt ponds are not the place for housing - they are a golden opportunity to restore healthy wetlands that scientists say the bay's wildlife desperately needs.

The rise in the sea level makes it even more urgent to restore shoreline marshes faster so they can provide natural flood protection for people and communities. Healthy marshes keep pace with modest sea level rise by building up sediment and establishing vegetation, creating buffers against rising tides. And common sense argues against putting new development at sea level on top of unstable bay mud at risk of liquefaction in an earthquake.

Redwood City has won awards for its downtown redevelopment, creating walkable communities close to Caltrain and shopping. City officials should not be tempted away from that wise path by Cargill's reckless plan. True infill development around transit hubs is the green way to accommodate Bay Area growth. Destroying the undeveloped open space that

makes the Bay Area so livable is not.

The bay, including these salt ponds, belongs to all of us, not just Redwood City. Because the era of filling in San Francisco Bay is over, this project should be pronounced dead on arrival, and the entire Bay Area should tell Cargill and DMB that housing doesn't belong in our bay.

David Lewis is executive director of Save the Bay.

This article appeared on page H - 2 of the San Francisco Chronicle

Ellie Cohen

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prbo

July 2, 2009

Rosanne Foust
Redwood City Mayor
204 Upland Court
Redwood City, CA 94062

Dear Mayor Foust:

On behalf of PRBO Conservation Science, I am writing today to express our strong opposition to the proposed salt pond development project in Redwood City put forward by Cargill and DMB Associates.

PRBO Conservation Science (PRBO) is a conservation science non-profit founded in 1965. We work throughout California, western United States, and the Antarctic to conserve birds, other wildlife, and their habitats through research and outreach. Our valued partnerships with resource management agencies, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and private landowners help us meet the ever-increasing demand for sound science to assess and guide conservation investments and policy.

PRBO is a leader in shorebird conservation nationally and internationally, and has been monitoring shorebirds in the Pacific Flyway for over 30 years. Our data were instrumental in designating the San Francisco Bay as a site of "Hemispheric Importance" (used by over 500,000 shorebirds) by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network in 1989.


Our science indicates the following consequences for wildlife and wetland ecosystems in the San Francisco Bay region if the proposed development occurs:

1. A loss of critical wintering and migratory stop-over habitat for at least 24,800 migratory shorebirds. PRBO biologists surveyed the Redwood Plant site during winter high tides in the 1990's. We documented between 9,600 and 24,800 migratory shorebirds using the ponds for resting, feeding, and wintering habitat. These were among the highest counts from the west side of the Bay between the Bay and Dumbarton bridges, making up 20-51% of the total from that region. We counted birds from outside the perimeter of the plant meaning these numbers are considered to be an underestimate of total shorebird abundance using the site. Conversion of this site from managed ponds to residential development would result in a loss of migratory stop-over and wintering habitat for these birds. Given that more than 90% of California's wetlands have been lost, preserving critical wetland habitat is essential to preserving healthy populations of migratory shorebirds along the Pacific Flyway.

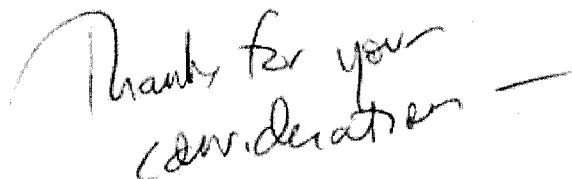
2. Habitat for the federally-threatened snowy plover will be impacted. PRBO biologists have documented the occurrence of the federally threatened Western Snowy Plover at the Redwood Plant site in the past. The listed Pacific coast population is now just 1500-2000 birds; to ensure the survival of this threatened species, nesting sites need to be protected.
3. The Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Report (1999), written by over 100 scientists and a wide range of public and private agencies, calls for the restoration of over 20,000 acres of tidal marsh and management of 10,000-15,000 acres of salt pond habitat for wildlife in the South Bay sub region of SF Bay. To meet the acreage goals and to maintain the health and integrity of the San Francisco Bay ecosystem, habitat such as those proposed for development by Cargill and DMB need to be restored and protected.
4. Developing undeveloped land will limit the ability to restore and protect tidal marsh, mudflats, and managed ponds as sea levels rise. Existing and future Intertidal habitats need to be restored, managed for wildlife, and protected from development to ensure that species and habitats have a place to which they can move as sea level rises. This is especially true for salt ponds with existing channel formations that greatly improve a site's ability to restore natural tidal function and provide some protection to nearby upland buildings as well as other infrastructure from rising sea levels.

Increased development at the Redwood City Saltworks poses serious threats to migratory birds and the ecosystem functions we all depend upon. For further information, please do not hesitate to contact Gary Page, Wetlands Ecology Director, at 415-868-0371, ext. 309, or by email at gpage@prbo.org. Thank you for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,



Ellie Cohen
President and CEO



Cc. R. Sean Randolph, Chair BCDC
Anne Halsted, Vice Chair, BCDC
Brian Baird, Commissioner
Tom Bates, Commissioner
Jim Bourgart, Commissioner
Valerie Brown, Commissioner
David Chiu, Commissioner

Karen Finn, Commissioner
Geoffrey Gibbs, Commissioner
John Gioia, Commissioner
Larry Goldzband, Commissioner
Richard Gordon, Commissioner
Jane Hicks, Commissioner
Colleen Jordan Hallinan,

Commissioner
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Joan Lundstrom, Commissioner
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